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May 27, 2008

***For Immediate Release***

## **UDOT LAUNCHES NEW ANTI-LITTER CAMPAIGN**

*Statewide Program Takes Pioneering Approach to Significantly Reduce Litter and Accidents by Targeting Unsecured Loads, Lost Cargo*

**SALT LAKE CITY** – John Njord, Executive Director of UDOT, today introduced Utah's new anti-litter campaign. "Litter Hurts," which includes television and radio commercials, billboards, highway patrol enforcement and a traveling display, is designed to significantly reduce the amount of litter on the highways and the number of accidents caused by debris as the result of unsecured items.

The "Litter Hurts" campaign is different from most anti-litter efforts that focus on small items such as soda cans and wrappers. Utah's campaign is one of the first in the nation targeting unsecured cargo, such as ladders, rakes and furniture. The campaign is based on research including findings that show the nature of litter on United States highways has shifted in the last 20 years from smaller deliberately discarded items to larger, unintentionally lost cargo.

More than 25,000 accidents on North America roads each year are caused by litter; there are more than 12,000 incidents of lost cargo reported annually in the Wasatch Front alone. These incidents often result in accidents that cause serious damage, injuries and even fatalities.

Litter Hurts, which launches statewide Wednesday, May 28, will educate and address the problem through TV and radio commercials, billboards, a traveling display, Utah Highway Patrol enforcement efforts, a Web site ([www.LitterHurts.Utah.Gov](http://www.LitterHurts.Utah.Gov)), and point-of-purchase signs at retailers such as IKEA, RC Willey, Sutherlands and Anderson Lumber. Several campaign elements, including the television commercials, feature images of actual accidents caused by litter on Utah roads. The Intrepid Group, a Salt Lake City-based communications firm, teamed with UDOT to create the campaign.

"Litter isn't just ugly, it's dangerous," Njord said. "We need drivers to do their part to help keep Utah's roads clean and safe — the few extra minutes it takes to properly secure cargo, both large and small, could be the difference between life and death."

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Njord was joined at the event by Utah Highway Patrol Colonel Lance Davenport and state Senator Pat Jones. Currently the Utah Highway Patrol fields approximately 1,000 calls each month along the Wasatch Front alone regarding lost cargo on Utah roads that needs to be removed for safety reasons.

Recognizing the severity of this growing safety issue, the Utah legislature recently passed SB44, sponsored by Senator Jones, which increases fines for littering. Utah law now requires drivers to properly secure items with fines up to \$500 for lost debris and up to \$250 for littering.

“UDOT is confident the Litter Hurts campaign, through its innovative approach and public outreach, will significantly reduce the amount of litter collected and most importantly the number of accidents on Utah’s highways every year,” Njord said.

More information about the Litter Hurts Campaign is available at [LitterHurts.Utah.Gov](http://LitterHurts.Utah.Gov).

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